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THE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION COMMISSION

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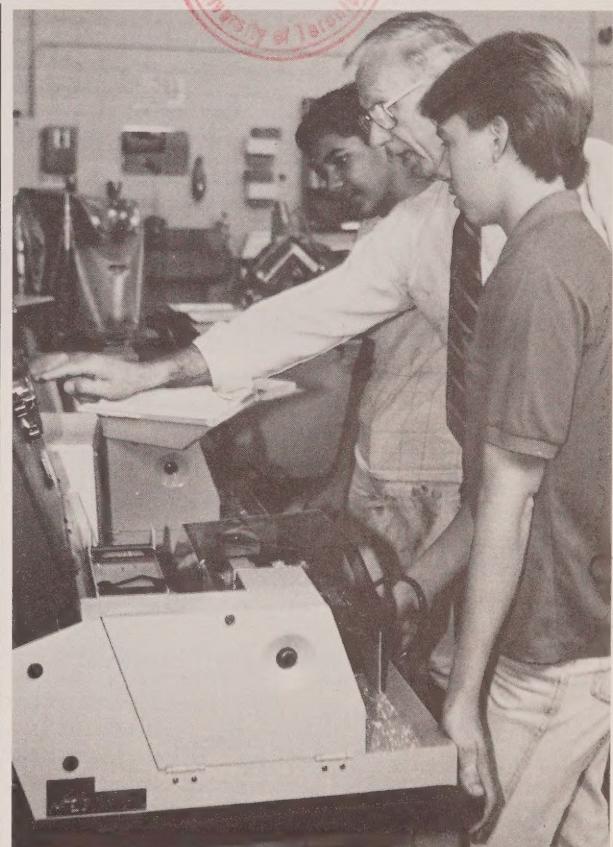
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PROGRAM REORGANIZATION IN NIAGARA SOUTH SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Like their colleagues elsewhere in Ontario, officials of the Niagara South Board of Education recognized years ago that declining enrolment was eroding key program areas and narrowing course choices for many students, particularly those in the Senior Division. The resulting program shrinkage threatened the level and breadth of education the board sought to provide.

In Niagara Falls, the board has responded by reorganizing the programs at the city's composite schools so that the schools offer a common program in Grades 9 and 10 and a distinctive one specific to each school in Grades 11 to 13/OAC. The result is an innovative structure that organizes programs in a manner that is consistent with both the board's objectives and the philosophy of Ontario Schools: Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1984 (OSIS).

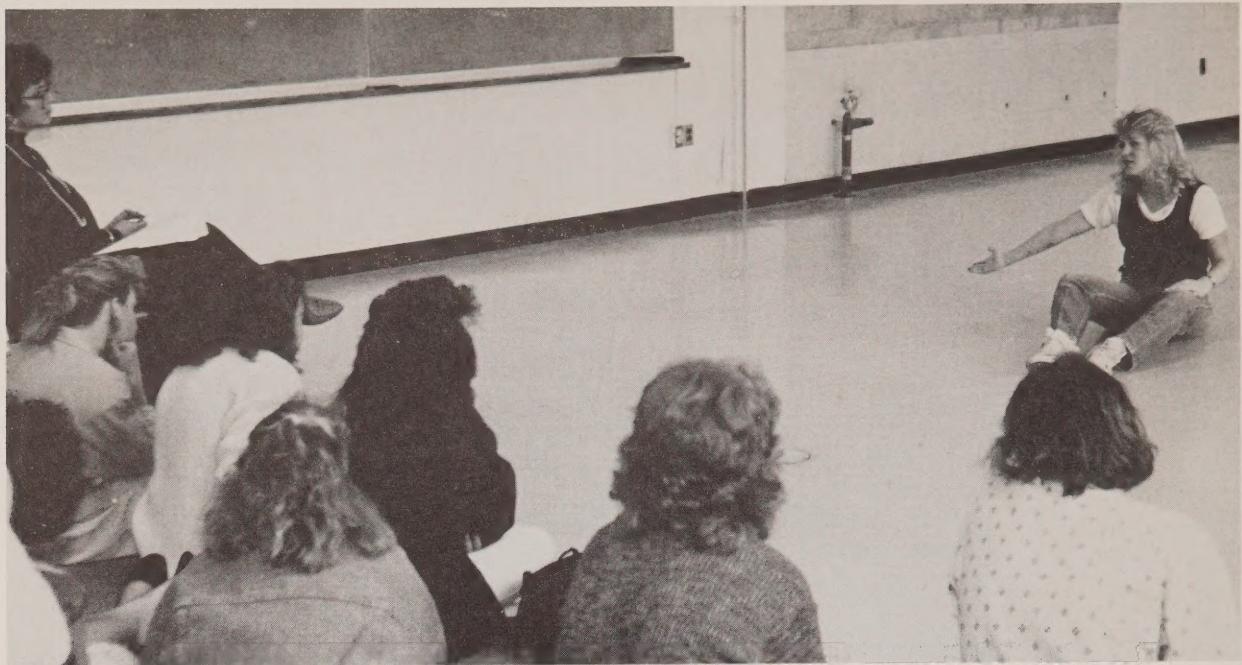
Robert Barless, superintendent of the program, is convinced that the reorganization, which entered its second year this past September, is highly successful. "We have not only kept alive all the courses identified as in jeopardy, but have been able to expand the number," Mr. Barless said. "In 1985-86 we maintained or added some thirty-eight courses, and this year maintained or added about sixty. During these two school years, about five hundred students have transferred to a new city school to take advantage of the



Westlane S.S. teacher, Mr. Jim Fredette, instructs students in use of computerized numerical control (CNC) lathes

packages of options offered at the senior level."

Niagara Falls has four composite public secondary schools: Niagara Falls Collegiate & Vocational Institute (N.F.C.V.I.) and Stamford C.V.I. in the older parts of the city, and A.N. Myer and Westlane Secondary Schools in the newer suburban areas. Enrolment had dropped most in the older schools; N.F.C.V.I. was particularly hard-hit and its course selection severely limited. Under the reorganization, the following program orientations have been introduced at the four schools:



Teacher Judith Rossman-Kurland, left, with students in Grade 11 drama class at Stamford C.V.I.

A.N. Myer - Languages
- Math, Sciences

N.F.C.V.I. - Basic Level Academic
- General Level Business
- General Level Technological Studies
- General Level Academic

Stamford - Arts
- Social Sciences
- Humanities

Westlane - Advanced Business Studies
- Advanced Technological Studies

Students are free to stay in their neighbourhood schools until they graduate. All four schools offer sufficient credits for diploma purposes.

Reorganization the Result of Lengthy Review

In 1979, Niagara South began a full-scale review of the impact of declining enrolment in its elementary schools and followed it with a report on secondary schools, entitled Future Directions. Released in 1983, the report proposed the closure of three county secondary schools, including N.F.C.V.I., and also addressed the issue of providing programs.

"Maintaining program was the crux of the situation," explained Don Jackson, superintendent of planning. "When enrolment declines, it's no longer possible to carry

on with the traditional 'everything for everybody' in each school. Our bilevel and multigrade classes were increasing significantly, and courses were disappearing one by one at the whim of student choice. What remained was a mosaic of whatever happened to be popular at that time.

"Although our students could still obtain enough credits to graduate, we were concerned about their ability to compete with students from large urban areas who had the advantage of wider course selection and more opportunity for program planning. Our report strongly suggested that program delivery be reorganized so that students would have access to as broad a choice as possible."

Public reaction to the prospect of school closings led the board to establish Program Planning Councils in four areas of the jurisdiction to search for ways to offset the effect of declining enrolment. The Niagara Falls area council proposed the program reorganization that is now being implemented. With a secondary school enrolment of about four thousand, Niagara Falls has a student base large enough to create reorganized units.

Five Program Areas Were Endangered

"From our monitoring of programs over the years, we were aware that certain ones were in jeopardy," Mr. Barless said. "We identified five areas in the Senior Division that needed consolidation if they were even

to be maintained, let alone expanded. These were business studies, technological studies, the arts, languages, and social sciences. Along with the need to strengthen these areas, we built into our planning model the directions set by OSIS and our ideas of what would be appropriate programming for the 1990s and beyond.

"Since our public consultations told us that parents were not comfortable seeing students moved in the early secondary years, we restricted ourselves to the neighbourhood school concept in Grades 9 and 10. All opportunities, at all levels of difficulty, would be available to students in their own locale. That meshed nicely with the OSIS direction that the Intermediate Division years should be exploratory ones in which students sample a variety of courses. OSIS also encourages program packaging. In the Senior Division, we would like to see students develop a clear program orientation in their studies without, of course, limiting their opportunities."

Using these criteria, Mr. Barless and his colleagues attempted to determine how courses could be appropriately packaged. Once that was done, they were in a position to place courses in particular schools on the basis of available facilities and existing school orientations. Students receive careful counselling in Grade 10 to enable them to make a wise selection of school and program as they enter Grade 11. The board provides transportation where needed, and in addition has received support from the Niagara Falls transit system, which co-operated by realigning some of its routes and co-ordinating its schedules with school starting times.

"For a long time we were told that students wouldn't move for program reasons," Mr. Barless said. "Our evidence is to the contrary; they will move if program opportunities are presented at other locations and transportation is provided. I think we're getting strong evidence that once students acquire some direction in their programs, they do just as well as, if not better than, they do if they choose from a 'smorgasbord' of course offerings."

As illustrations of how reorganization has restored courses, Joseph Mergl, Superintendent of Secondary Schools, cited languages and secretarial studies: "About the only language that was still alive in the schools was French. Through consolidation we now offer five languages at A.N. Myer, including a resurrection of Latin. Again, the senior secretarial program was dying on its feet. But we've been able to put that together at N.F.C.V.I. and have a booming business department there at the general level."

Mr. Mergl said that, initially, parents

were worried about the social effects of separating students from their friends at the end of Grade 10, but last year's experience showed that "the kids nicely accommodated themselves in their new surroundings." Friendship among students often stems from similar interests, so students frequently moved to a new school in groups.

Mr. Mergl added that teachers, fearing the loss of a school's better students, also expressed concerns about the changes. However, the reorganization has made it possible for teachers, forced by enrolment decline to move out of their areas of expertise, to return to familiar ground. This is especially true for teachers of technical subjects. Mergl said that many teachers had moved voluntarily to different schools to take positions that fitted their interests and backgrounds.

School Principals Optimistic About New Plan

With program reorganization now well into its second year, the school principals involved are optimistic it will work for the benefit of the students. Howard Triano, who moved to A.N. Myer this year after several years as principal of Stamford, commented, "I've found that my students here at Myer understand and accept the idea of program packaging, and realize it gives them access to more courses. They're prepared to move to another school if they see the advantage in it. Students are more adaptable than we give them credit for."

Ed Minchin, Mr. Triano's successor at Stamford, said that the school's emphasis on the arts is attracting excellent teachers in drama, music, and the visual arts. A shop area has been converted to an art room, and a small gymnasium will be turned into a flexible performing arts area. In addition, the school is strengthening its ties with the board's Centre for the Arts, located in a secondary school in nearby Fonthill.

The program at Westlane, in Mr. Barless's view, will be unique in Ontario in emphasizing the linkage between science and technology.

"We envisage Westlane emerging as a school much like what has been suggested as a school for science and technology in northern Ontario," he said. "We've installed high-technology equipment, such as computerized numeric control units, to assist in the teaching of computer-aided design and manufacturing and robotics. New senior courses have been developed in industrial control, hydraulics and pneumatics, and principles of technology, which will include robotics. Principles of Technology is heavily based on math and

industrial physics but other courses, even in the social sciences, will be linked to it rather than taught in isolation, as part of an integrated unit."

At N.F.C.V.I., the program consists chiefly of business and technical courses offered at the basic and general levels, including the only secretarial program available in the city's secondary schools. A smaller number of academic courses is also offered. The school has made an effort to attract adults seeking academic upgrading and skills retraining, and currently enrols about sixty. As well, Principal Fred Harvie described plans to develop programs that would prepare students for entry-level jobs in tourism and hospitality, industries that now flourish virtually year-round in Niagara Falls.

Careful Counselling Is Key to Plan's Success

Counselling on career plans and program choice is central to the success of Niagara South's reorganization. Before the first transfer of students to Grade 11 in different schools, all Grade 10 students and their parents were counselled by guidance personnel or other school staff members, and a career sheet was developed for each student's senior years.

To enhance the guidance function, the board is establishing a Career Information Centre in a former Niagara Falls elementary school. Its major emphasis, Mr. Barless explained, will be on providing students with opportunities to explore various career directions through contact with people from the working world and through the CHOICES software, and to receive an intensive assessment of their aptitudes and interests.

In the near future, Niagara South plans to strengthen career guidance further by creating, in collaboration with other school boards in Welland and Lincoln counties, an Industry-Education Council modelled after a long-established council in the Hamilton-Wentworth area.

within a Roman Catholic setting in a public high school. The protocols between the Carleton Board of Education and the Carleton Roman Catholic Separate School Board detail the elements that have made this possible: parent access to information about both boards' secondary programs; shared accommodation, programs, and services at Ecole secondaire Louis Riel; protection of employee interests; and ongoing consultation.

Before Bill 30, Francophone students from the RCSS board elementary schools attended one of the two French-language secondary schools of the Carleton Board of Education - Louis Riel and Ecole secondaire Garneau. On average, 90 per cent of these students were Roman Catholic. When passage of the Bill was imminent, parents were consulted about the new option. They gave a clear message: Keep the Francophone high school community intact within one school, and maintain the quality of education that we expect and value.

The question for the RCSS board became "How can we do this and at the same time provide programs for those students who opt to continue in a Roman Catholic setting in secondary school?"

The solution? The establishment of a Pavillon catholique within E.S. Louis Riel.

Parents now had a choice. Trustees and staff of both boards were determined that it would be an informed choice. Together they developed honest, fair, and considerate materials and programs for parent information meetings. They designed a joint option form (board of education on one side, RCSS board on the other) so that simultaneous distribution was guaranteed.

All decisions about programs, accommodation, and services centred on two questions: "Where do the students fit?", "What will be the consequences for them?".

The protocol items concerning fair treatment of board of education staff were worked out in consultation with representatives of the OSSTF and AEFO. Job security was not a serious issue since Carleton Region is growing.

The result? Two hundred Grade 9 students are attending E.S. Louis Riel. All attend the same classes, take part in the same extracurricular activities, and have the same teachers. Sixty-five of the two hundred also belong to the Pavillon catholique, where they have their own home rooms, attend a religious study course, and receive pastoral services.

The Pavillon has no bricks and no mortar. Ultimate responsibility rests with the principal of Louis Riel, Robert Brisson, who is a member of the board of education. One vice-principal, François LaRoche (on secondment from the board of education), is

SHARED ACCOMMODATION IN CARLETON

Sharing facilities and finding co-operative solutions to classroom needs are two of the principles of the extension process endorsed by the Planning and Implementation Commission.

A brief eight-page agreement incorporating these principles paved the way for an agreement between the boards: sixty-five Francophone students are studying

responsible for daily Pavillon administration. As well, he assumes some administrative duties for the school as a whole and teaches senior history part time.

All staff maintain normal working relationships, free of additional responsibilities and assignments. The only exclusive appointment to the Pavillon is the teacher responsible for religious education, pastoral care, and guidance.

Three months into the school year, everyone connected with the enterprise agrees that it is working. Robert Brisson, Principal of Louis Riel, says that "there has really been no change." And Vice-Principal François LaRoche proudly observes, "It's going very well. We've had no real problems."

What have been the enabling factors?

Ronald Fraser, board of education deputy director, says, "We acknowledged that we were dealing with sensitive issues, issues we might have preferred not to deal with. We also knew that if we maintained our professional integrity and our sense of humour we could achieve our goal - equal student access to quality education."

Robert Poirier, assistant superintendent of the RCSS board, credits the clear enunciation of core principles by the boards and their decision to trust the implementation to staff: "We had a clear understanding that we would co-operate and we have. We have no hidden agenda. We also recognized that we had to work with the community to reduce the tension and confusion and to keep polarization at a minimum."

No one suggests that Carleton solutions will necessarily work in other regions. But Mr. Poirier has some advice that's probably useful in every extension project, which could be summarized as follows:

Constructive compromise brings constructive solutions.

Each situation has some lessons to offer, but it has to be recognized that there are some unique problems which each school entity in a shared building will have to face.

The most obvious concern is that the identity and autonomy of each school entity has to be respected and maintained. In existing two-entity schools, that identity is linked to the language of instruction, but where a Roman Catholic secondary school and a public secondary school, both of which are English-language schools, share the same premises, the identifier is not so obvious. Each school has to undertake activities deliberately designed to strengthen its identity and there has to be a clearly identified territory for each school. At the same time, rivalry as a means of promoting school spirit should be avoided because of its possible unfortunate effects.

If two or three school entities, or parts of school entities, are to share the same building there has to be a clear definition of responsibilities, and of the space allocation for each. The adage that good fences make for good neighbours applies. It is very important that the schools sharing a building should attempt to anticipate and find ways of dealing with problems which may arise. It should be recognized however, that not all problems can be foreseen and that to foresee some may be to create them unnecessarily. A good working relationship is very important.

Senior administrators and principals, in particular, have to work closely together to make such a venture possible and successful. There has to be a strong commitment to the sharing concept by the principals and a willingness to find solutions to the difficulties which may arise.

Regardless of which school board owns the building, the occupants of each entity must feel a sense of ownership in their portion of the building. A pupil and a teacher must each feel "This is my school." Out of this will flow the positive feeling of pupils and teachers about their school which is necessary for its success as an institution. Each school has to feel that in the relationship in the building, it is being treated fairly: those responsible for the operation have to be sensitive to this dimension of the management so that no one feels disadvantaged or unfairly treated in relationship to the others. An owner/tenant or host/guest relationship is not likely to foster these kinds of attitudes.

From a community point of view, if the matter of school identity can be satisfactorily addressed, a sharing arrangement offers advantages. It provides for an efficient use of an existing school

EXCERPTS FROM COMMISSION "GUIDELINES FOR SHARING OF ACCOMMODATION"

The experience of secondary schools sharing a single school building has been limited to those situations where construction delays have forced two schools to use a single school building at different times of the day or where a French-language school entity has been established in the same school building as another secondary school whose language of instruction is English.

building and avoids the cost of constructing duplicate facilities which may result in unutilized classrooms in an existing secondary school. Sharing arrangements may also limit the need for rearrangement of school attendance boundaries by both boards or avoid the closure of a school by a board. The larger pupil enrolment base of two schools in the one building permits the schools to explore the possibilities of offering courses which might not be viable otherwise. The opportunity for pupils is thereby widened.

Sharing a building will not be easy, but it should be a rewarding experience for all concerned if the enterprise is treated in a positive fashion and the individuality of each school entity is respected and fostered.

The Ministry of Education has defined sharing for the purposes of the capital grant plan as a situation where the number of day school pupils enrolled in an entity on September 30 is in excess of 10% of the total number of pupils enrolled in the school entities in the building. Sharing might be arranged on the basis either of complete school entities being set up in the same building to operate or some classes from another school being assigned to the building for their programs.

Section 12.6.4.2 of the Capital Grant Plan, 1979 as amended by Amendment No. 5 has the following provisions:

In some school buildings, it may be possible for a wing or block of classrooms to be designated for the use of an entity which will contain or can be altered to contain all of the facilities required such as administrative/counselling areas and specialized classrooms such as laboratories or shops. In other buildings a block of general purpose classrooms may be designated for the use of an entity, and areas altered for use as offices, but some or all specialized facilities may have to be shared with classes from the other entity. It is almost certain that gymnasia will have to be shared in either case.

It is particularly important in scheduling the use of space and the access to physical facilities which are shared for both curricular and extra-curricular purposes that each entity feel it is being treated fairly.

Boards might make arrangements, as was noted in the Ministry's grant plan provisions, for the shared use of school services such as the cafeteria, the library or media resources and equipment as well as for the use of classrooms and teaching areas.

Sharing of a secondary school building provides an opportunity for school boards to offer, especially in smaller school entities, a breadth of program and quality of facilities which would not be possible for them individually. In many communities, the only way in which a viable Roman Catholic secondary school can be established will be as an entity sharing a building with a public secondary school entity. In others, the maintenance of a viable public secondary school will depend upon a co-operative sharing arrangement.

Each school, as part of the sharing and the association, has to recognize, accept and support the individuality and the character of the other. It will be out of this kind of association that the two entities, like friends, will learn how they can help each other to provide the best educational experience for their students. Each may also explore and discover the opportunities available in co-operating to extend the breadth of programs for its pupils.

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"La réussite repose sur La coopération"

Le conseil des écoles catécholiques s'est alors retrouvé devant le problème suivant : "Comment pourvons-nous satisfaire ces demandes et offrir en même temps des programmes aux élèves désireux de poursuivre des études secondaires dans un cadre catéchique ?"

La solution : L'établissement d'un pavillon catécholique qui ferait partie de l'école secondaire Louis-Riel.

Un choix s'offrait dèsormais aux parents. Les conséillers scolaires et le personnel des deux collèges de la place ont donc formule d'optimum conjointe (le conseil de l'éducation) une distribution similaire. Toutes les décisions concernant les programmes, les instances concernant les séries se sont faites sur les deux séances de deux séances aux élèves ? Quelles seront les conséquences aux élèves ?

Les résultats du programme sont tout à fait satisfaisants : quelle sera la place des associations d'enseignants. La mise en œuvre de ce programme fut relativement facile et tout le développement constant de la région de Carleton.

Le résultat est maintenant connu : deux centres éducatifs de 9^e année fréquentent l'école secondaire Louis-Riel. Ils suivent tous les mêmes classes, prennent part aux mêmes activités extrascalaires et ont les mêmes enseignants. Sixante-cinq de ces élèves relèvent du pavillon catéchique où ils ont leur classe d'attaché, suivent un cours d'enseignement religieux et régivent des services de pasteurale.

Le pavillon n'est fait ni de briques ni de pierre, c'est-à-dire qu'il n'est pas mis à part de l'école publique. C'est à M. Robert Britton, directeur de l'école secondaire Louis-Riel et membre du conseil d'administration de l'école publique, que l'on doit l'ensemble de l'administration quotidienne du pavillon. Il assume également la responsabilité de charge de l'administration quotidienne (détachée par le conseil de l'école Larocque, directeur adjoint de l'école de toute école. Quant à M. Tramagis de l'école, il assume la responsabilité de toutes les fonctions administratives pour l'ensemblle de l'école et enfin l'historie à temps partiel au cycle supérieur.

Tout le personnel maintient des liens de travail qui ne sont pas divisés par des responsabilités ou des fonctions précises.

Le seul poste exclusif au pavillon est celui de l'enseignant matinéant des lignes de partiel au cycle supérieur.

COOPÉRATION AU SEIN DES CONSEILS DE CARFETO

de ce centre, selon M. Barlès, est de délivrer des bulletins d'exploration des personnes en rencontrant des personnes qui ont voté tous les métiers et en permanence au logiciel CHOIX; il leur permet aussi de recevoir une évaluation intensive de leurs aptitudes et de leurs intérêts. Dans un procès avancé, le conseil de Nagara Sud envisage de renforcer davantage les services d'orientation en collaboration avec les conseils scolaires des comtés de Mellland et de Lincoln, un conseil qui regroupe des représentants des industries et des institutions de la région consacrés à l'enseignement et à l'éducation. Ce conseil s'inspirera de celui de la région Hamilton-Wentworth, établi depuis plusieurs années.

Une brève entente de huit pages énonce l'incorporation ces éléments à abouti à une solution : soixante-cinq élèves francophones survivent leurs études dans un cadre catholique, au sein d'une école secondaire publique. Le protocole d'entente concilie conflit des écoles séparées catholiques de Carlleton décrit en détail les facteurs qui rendu cette initiative possible :

Conseil des écoles séparées catholiques de Carlleton décrit en détail les facteurs qui accès des parents aux renseignements sur les programmes offerts par les deux écoles secondaires ; le partage des locaux, des programmes et des services de l'école

Avant les réformes proposées par le projet de loi 30, les élèves deux conseils des écoles élémentaires du conseil de Carlleton se détruisent automatiquement vers l'automne suivant car l'école secondaire de Carleton propose de la nouvelle option. Les parents à propos de la nouvelle option leur message était clair : garder les élèves francophones du secondaire dans une seule école et maintenir la qualité de l'éducation.

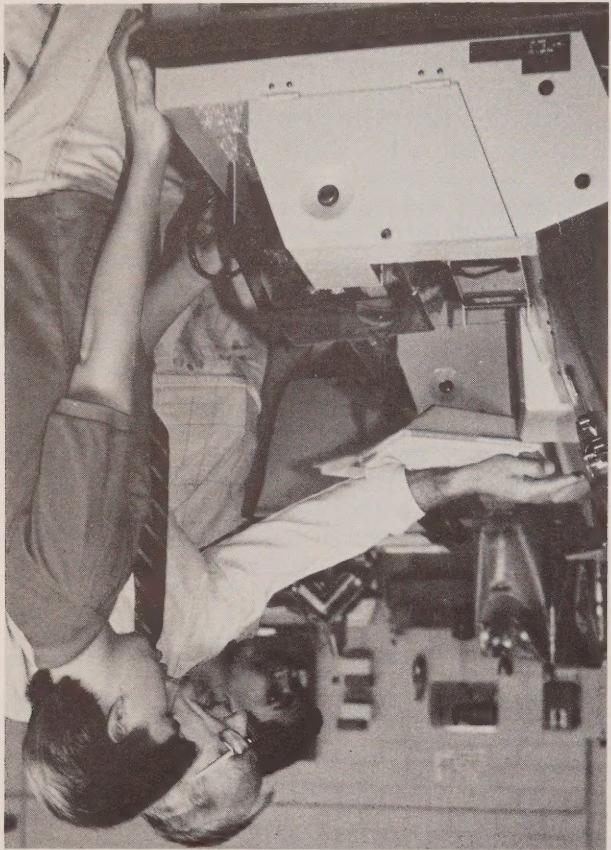
En moyenne, 90 pour 100 des élèves catholiques de Carleton, soit l'école secondaire de Carleton, sont à l'école secondaire de Gatineau. Louis-Riel ou l'école secondaire de Gatineau frangaise du conseil de Carlleton se détruisent automatiquement vers l'automne suivant car l'école secondaire de Carleton propose de la nouvelle option. Les parents à propos de la nouvelle option leur message était clair : garder les élèves francophones du secondaire dans une seule école et maintenir la qualité de l'éducation.

Le résultat de l'école secondaire de Gatineau est à l'école secondaire de Carleton, soit l'école secondaire de Gatineau. En moyenne, 90 pour 100 des élèves catholiques de Carleton, soit l'école secondaire de Gatineau. Louis-Riel ou l'école secondaire de Gatineau se détruisent automatiquement vers l'automne suivant car l'école secondaire de Carleton propose de la nouvelle option. Les parents à propos de la nouvelle option leur message était clair : garder les élèves francophones du secondaire dans une seule école et maintenir la qualité de l'éducation.

COMMISSION DE PLACEMENT PUBLIEE PAR LA ET DE MISE EN OEUVRE

demande d'excéllentes résultats. "Non
seulemement nous avons pu ainsi préserver tous
les cours qui étaient menacés, dit-il, mais
il a été possible d'en augmenter le nombre.
Nous avons conservé ou ajouté trente-huit
cours en 1985-1986 et environ soixante cette
année. Ces deux dernières années scolaires,
environ cinq cents élèves se sont inscrits
dans une nouvelle école pour profiter des
groupes d'options offerts au cycle
supérieur." ■

Un professeur de l'école secondaire Westland, M. Jim Fredette, explique à des élèves l'usage d'appareils de commandes numériques informatiques



Vol. 3, no. 2

R. A. L. Thomas, Directeur général

The Ontario logo, which consists of a stylized three-leaf maple leaf inside a circle.

December 1986

Dans ce numéro:

Réorganisation des programmes des écoles secondaires de Niagara Sud

Extraits des "Recommandations de La Commission pour le partage des Locaux"

ORGANISATION DES DES

NIAGARA SUD

SECONDARIES DE

A l'instant de leurs collègues des autres régions de l'Ontario, les administrateurs du conseil de Niagara Sud avaient députés des amées que le déclin des effectifs ministériels importants domaines étude et redéfinition des cours qui offrait à bon nombre d'élèves, en partiellement à cycle du choix des cours qui améliorait la qualité de l'éducation et la menagat la programmation d'études variété des programmes que le conseil vouait à fournir.

A Niagara Falls, le conseil a réagi en regroupant les programmes des écoles secondaires de la ville de Fagon à ce qu'illes offrent toutes un programme commun en 9 et 10 amée et un programme commun 11 à la 13 amée et aux cours distinct propres à chaque école, de la réussite une structure novatrice pourrisant des programmes conformes à la fois aux objectifs du philtosopthe de la circulaire Les écoles de l'Ontario aux cycles intermédiaire et supérieure.

Pour M. Robert Barless, administrateur des programmes, cette réorganisation, dans sa